

Civil Air Patrol

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Col James H. Kasler Senior Squadron

NEWS RELEASE

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HOOSIER NATIVE HONORED IN NAME CHANGE

Greenwood, Indiana -- 22-Mar-05 -- Civil Air Patrol ("CAP") announced today that the Johnson County Senior Squadron, part of the Indiana Wing, has been renamed the Col. James H. Kasler Senior Squadron. Kasler is a Hoosier native. Born in South Bend, he graduated from Shortridge High School in Indianapolis and later attended Butler University.

The idea for a squadron name change was first brought up in the Fall of 2004. According to squadron commander Lt. Col. Larry Lopshire, "We wanted a name that was not so geographically limiting because we serve all across the State of Indiana." In searching for a namesake, the squadron wanted to be certain to honor a Hoosier veteran, preferably one from the U.S. Air Force or its predecessor the US Army Air Corps. Lopshire went on to say, "ultimately, research lead to Colonel Kasler, who seemed like a perfect candidate."

A three-time Air Force Cross recipient, Jim Kasler served in WWII as a B-29 gunner seeing combat over Japan. After the war, he attended Butler University for three years before entering the Air Force pilot training program in 1950. During his service in Korea, Kasler became an ace pilot. On August 8, 1966, while flying a mission over North Vietnam, he was shot down and captured. He was held at the infamous "Hanoi Hilton" with other such notables as James Stockdale and John McCain. Enduring frequent torture, Kasler was released on March 4, 1973 after spending 6 1/2 years in captivity.

An official name change ceremony is planned for April 23, 2004 during the annual Indiana Wing awards luncheon.

Civil Air Patrol, the official U.S. Air Force auxiliary, is a nonprofit organization with almost 62,000 members nationwide. It performs 95% of continental U.S. inland search and rescue missions as tasked by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center. Volunteers also perform homeland security, disaster relief and counterdrug missions at the request of federal, state and local agencies. The members take a leading role in aerospace education and serve as mentors to the almost 27,000 young people currently participating in CAP cadet programs. CAP has been performing missions for America for more than 60 years.

There are over 700 Civil Air Patrol members in Indiana.

For more information about Civil Air Patrol, call 1-800-FLY-2338 or on the web: <http://www.cap.gov>

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